

AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 11, 2006

AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 3, 2006

SENATE BILL

No. 1731

Introduced by Senator Speier

February 24, 2006

An act to add Section 49605 to the Education Code, relating to pupil counseling, and making an appropriation therefor.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1731, as amended, Speier. Guidance counseling: funding.

Existing law authorizes the governing board of any school district to provide a comprehensive educational counseling program for all pupils enrolled in the schools of the district.

This bill would appropriate \$36,400,000 from the General Fund to the State Department of Education for the purpose of increasing the number of guidance counselors in certain public schools ~~including kindergarten and grades 1 to 12, inclusive~~. The bill would prohibit the use of the ~~amount~~ appropriated *moneys* to supplant existing funds used to pay for specified school guidance counselor costs. The bill would make related declarations and findings, as well as a statement of legislative intent.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: yes. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 49605 is added to the Education Code,
2 to read:

1 49605. (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the
2 following:

3 (1) California ranks 51st among the 50 states and the District
4 of Columbia in guidance counseling support for pupils.

5 (2) California has less than 7,000 guidance counselors for
6 more than six million pupils in public schools including all or
7 any of kindergarten and grades 1 to 12, inclusive. In California
8 public schools there is an average of one counselor per 906
9 pupils.

10 (3) The American School Counselor Association recommends
11 a ratio of an average of one counselor per 250 *pupils*.

12 (4) In 2003, the California Department of Education studied
13 the level of pupil support services provided in public schools
14 including all or any of kindergarten and grades 1 to 12, inclusive.
15 The department found that 306 school districts, out of 985, in the
16 state failed to provide even one guidance counselor to their
17 pupils.

18 (5) School districts overwhelmingly recognize the need for
19 more guidance counselors and have identified district budget
20 limitations as a major obstacle to increasing their numbers.

21 (6) Studies have identified a direct correlation between pupil
22 performance and *pupil* access to adequate guidance counseling.

23 (7) In order for California's ratio of guidance counselors ~~per to~~
24 pupils to reach the national average, ~~California~~ school districts
25 would need to hire nearly 6,000 new guidance counselors.

26 (8) In order for California's ratio of guidance counselors to
27 reach the national average, school districts require approximately
28 \$400 million in additional education funding.

29 (b) It is the intent of the Legislature to double the number of
30 guidance counselors in public schools including any or all of
31 kindergarten and grades 1 to 12, inclusive, over the next five
32 years, or sooner if fiscally possible, and to provide pupils with
33 the guidance counseling they need *in order* to prepare for the
34 future.

35 (c) The amount of thirty-six million four hundred thousand
36 dollars (\$36,400,000) is hereby appropriated from the General
37 Fund in fiscal year 2006–07 to the State Department of
38 Education in order to provide one credentialed guidance
39 counselor for each middle~~and~~, junior high *and high* school

- 1 ranked in deciles 1 to 3, inclusive, on the Academic Performance
- 2 Index.
- 3 (d) Funds appropriated pursuant to this section shall not be
- 4 used to supplant existing funds used to pay for the salary or
- 5 benefits, or both, of a school guidance counselor.

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